and customs contained in the classical books which Confucianism so highly esteems were thought of as normal.

The ties binding the family together have been many. So numerous and so strong are they that it is not strange that the family has been prominent and enduring. First of all, the family has exercised certain important functions. Through it have been perpetuated the honors to ancestors stressed by Confucianism and ancient custom. Upon the maintenance of these ceremonies, as we have seen, has been believed to depend the welfare of the dead and the living. The family, too, has constituted a kind of mutual protective association. China has been a nation in which the individual has found it difficult to stand alone. In a keenly competitive society organized by groups the man who attempts to make his way unassisted is more likely than not to be crushed. The family has been and is the most widely spread of these groups. It is especially adapted to rural areas and to the villages and small towns whose affiliations with the soil are very close. Since China was and is predominantly agricultural by occupation, it is not surprising that the family has been prominent. In the larger cities it has not usually been so outstanding, and other forms of association, such as the guild, have tended to take over some of its functions. When, as has often been the case, a family has risen to importance in an urban center, not infrequently it has continued rooted in the soil through membership in a "clan" whose seat is in the country, or through possession of the favorite form of investment, farming lands. In the North, where the larger family, or "clan," generally has not been so prominent as in the South, secret societies—another form of mutual protection—have flour-

ished. The family also, as we have seen, has often exercised some of the functions which in the modern Occident are performed by the government—such as the settlement of disputes among its members, poor relief, and the maintenance of schools. In many instances, it will be recalled, the village government itself has been a family affair.

Ethical concepts have contributed to the strength of the family. Of the five relations emphasized by traditional moral standards and reenforced by Confucianism—those between prince and minister, father and son, older brother and younger brother, husband and wife, and friend and friend—three are in the family.